WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1   1.   A method comprising:

2   maintaining in a first server unique references to

3   content received from primary servers;

4   maintaining an index containing the unique references to

5   the content; and

6   notifying a secondary server when updated content has

7   been added to the first server.

1   2.   The method of claim 1 further comprising notifying the

2   secondary server when content has expired.

1   3.   The method of claim 1 wherein the unique references refer

2   to local content.

1   4.   The method of claim 1 wherein the unique references refer

2   to pointers to content.

1   5.   The method of claim 1 further including passing one of

2   the unique references to the secondary server for use in

3   fetching the content.

1   6.   The method of claim 5 wherein the secondary server

2   manages its cache size in relationship to fetched content or

3   metadata.

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1   7.   The method of claim 6 further comprising:

2   fetching the content in the secondary server; and

3   checking a size of the fetched content with a size of the

4   cache containing current content in the secondary server.

1   8.   The method of claim 5 wherein the secondary server

2   manages its cache size in relationship to previously fetched

3   content or metadata.

1   9.   The method of claim 5 wherein passing further comprises

2   copying content identified by the unique reference to the

3   secondary server.

1   10.   The method of claim 9 further comprising checking the

2   secondary server to determine whether the content is already

3   present.

1   11.   The method of claim 9 wherein passing further comprises

2   copying metadata associated with the content identified by the

3   unique reference to the secondary server.

1   12.   The method of claim 1 further comprising delivering the

2   copied content to a user system.

1   13.   The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving a user

2   request and effecting the delivering in response to the user

3   request.

1   14.   The method of claim 5 wherein passing further comprises

2   verifying that the secondary server is authorized to receive

3   content.

1   15.   The method of claim 5 wherein passing further comprises

2   updating a tracking file that reflects a user request for

3   content.

1   16.   The method of claim 5 wherein the passing further

2   comprises updating a tracking file that reflects maintaining

3   and notifying.

1   17.   The method of claim 1 wherein the secondary server

2   maintains the index.

1   18.   The method of claim 17 wherein the secondary server

2   notifies a tertiary server when content expires.

1   19.   The method of claim 18 wherein the secondary server

2   passes one of the unique references to the tertiary server.

1   20.   The method of claim 19 wherein the secondary server

2   verifies that the tertiary server is authorized to receive

3   content.

1   21.   The method of claim 19 wherein the secondary server

2   maintains and updates a tracking file that reflects actions

3   performed with the index.

1   22.   A computer program product residing on a computer

2   readable medium having instructions stored thereon which, when

3   executed by the processor, cause the processor to:

4   maintain in a first server unique references to content

5   received from primary servers;

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6   maintain an index containing the unique references to the

7   content; and

8   notify a secondary server when updated content has been

9   added to the first server.

1   23. The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the

2   computer readable medium comprises a random access memory

3   (RAM).

1   24. The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the

2   computer readable medium comprises read only memory (ROM).

1   25. The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the

2   computer readable medium comprises a hard disk drive.

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1   26. A processor and a memory configured to:

2   maintain in a first server unique references to content

3   received from primary servers;

4   maintain an index containing the unique references to the

5   content; and

6   notify a secondary server when updated content has been

7   added to the first server.

1   27. A method comprising:

2   maintaining a store of content received from primary

3   servers in a first server;

4   maintaining an index containing unique references to the

5   content residing in the store;

6   receiving a user request for content at a secondary

7   server;

8   passing a unique reference associated with the user

9   requested content to the secondary server; and

10   copying the content associated with the unique reference

11   from the store to the secondary server.

1   28. The method of claim 27 wherein the secondary server

2   manages its cache size in relationship to fetched content.

1   29. The method of claim 28 further comprising:

2   fetching the content in the secondary server; and

3   checking a size of the fetched content with a size of the

4   cache containing current content in the secondary server.

1   30.   The method of claim 27 further comprising notifying the

2   secondary server when content has expired.

1   31.   The method of claim 27 further comprising delivering the

2   user requested content from the secondary server to a user

3   system.

1   32.   The method of claim 27 wherein passing further comprises

2   verifying whether the secondary server is authorized to

3   receive the unique reference.

1   33.   The method of claim 27 further comprising accumulating

2   data that represents tracking user requests for content.

1   34.   The method of claim 27 further comprising accumulating

2   data that represents tracking the maintaining, receiving,

3   passing and copying.

1   35.   The method of claim 33 further comprising:

2   analyzing the data in response to requests from the

3   primary servers; and

4   generating reports from the analyzed data.

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1   36. The method of claim 34 further comprising:

2   analyzing the data in response to requests from the

3   primary servers; and

4   generating reports from the analyzed data.

1   37. The method of claim 27 wherein the secondary server

2   maintains the index.

1   38. The method of claim 37 wherein the secondary server

2   notifies a tertiary server when content expires.

1   39. The method of claim 38 wherein the secondary server

2   passes one of the unique references to the tertiary server.

1   40. The method of claim 39 wherein the secondary server

2   verifies that the tertiary server is authorized to receive

3   content.

1   41. The method of claim 39 wherein the secondary server

2   maintains and updates a tracking file that reflects actions

3   performed with the index.

1   42. A computer program product residing on a computer

2   readable medium having instructions stored thereon which, when

3   executed by the processor, cause the processor to:

4   maintain a store of content received from primary servers

5   in a first server;

6   maintain an index containing unique references to the

7   content residing in the store;

8   receive a user request for content at a secondary server;

9   pass a unique reference associated with the user

10   requested content to the secondary server; and

11   copy the content associated with the unique reference

12   from the store to the secondary server.

1   43.   A processor and a memory configured to:

2   maintain a store of content received from primary servers

3   in a first server;

4   maintain an index containing unique references to the

5   content residing in the store;

6   receive a user request for content at a secondary server;

7   pass a unique reference associated with the user

8   requested content to the secondary server; and

9   copy the content associated with the unique reference

10   from the store to the secondary server.

1   44.   A system comprising:

2   a plurality of content origination servers linked to a

3   first server;

4   a plurality of servers linked to the first server, the

5   first server comprising:

6   a store for maintaining and distributing content received

7   from the primary servers;

8   means for maintaining an index of unique identifiers

9   associated with the stored content;

10   means for passing one of the unique identifiers to one of

11   the servers; and

12   means for delivering the content associated with a unique

13   identifier to the server.

1   45. The system of claim 44 further comprising means for

2   notifying the server when content has expired.

1   46. The system of claim 44 where the means for passing also

2   comprises a means for authenticating that the server is

3   authorized to received the unique identifier.

1   47. The system of claim 44 also comprising means for

2   notifying the server when content associated with a unique

3   identifier is updated.

1   48. A method comprising:

2   on a server, storing content that has been requested by a

3   previous user and has not expired,

4   serving the unexpired, previously requested content from

5   the web server to a current user in response to a request,

6   if the current user requests content that is not stored

7   on the web server, obtaining the content from a central

8   location and storing it in the server for use in responding to

9   later user requests, and

10   removing expired content from the web server.

1   49. The method of claim 48 also comprising

2   informing the server when content has expired.

1   50. The method of claim 48 further comprising

2   on the server, communicating with a remote process on a

3   remote server, the remote process caching content.

4   51.   A method comprising:

5   maintaining in a first server unique references to

6   content received from primary servers; and

7   notifying a secondary server when content has expired.

1   52.   The method of claim 51 further comprising notifying the

2   secondary server when updated content has been added to the

3   first server.

1   53.   The method of claim 51 further comprising maintaining an

2   index containing the unique references to the content.

1   54.   The method of claim 51 wherein the unique references

2   refer to local content.

1   55.   The method of claim 51 wherein the unique references

2   refer to pointers to content.

1   56.   The method of claim 51 further including passing one of

2   the unique references to the secondary server for use in

3   fetching the content.

1   57.   The method of claim 56 wherein the secondary server

2   manages its cache size in relationship to fetched content or

3   metadata.

1   58.   The method of claim 57 further comprising:

2   fetching the content in the secondary server; and

3   checking a size of the fetched content with a size of the

4   cache containing current content in the secondary server.

1   59.   The method of claim 56 wherein the secondary server

2   manages its cache size in relationship to previously fetched

3   content or metadata.

1   60.   The method of claim 56 wherein passing further comprises

2   copying content identified by the unique reference to the

3   secondary server.

1   61.   The method of claim 60 further comprising checking the

2   secondary server to determine whether the content is already

3   present.

1   62.   The method of claim 60 wherein passing further comprises

2   copying metadata associated with the content identified by the

3   unique reference to the secondary server.

1   63.   The method of claim 60 further comprising delivering the

2   copied content to a user system.

1   64.   The method of claim 51 further comprising receiving a

2   user request and effecting a delivering in response to the

3   user request.

1   65. The method of claim 56 wherein passing further comprises

2   verifying that the secondary server is authorized to receive

3   content.

1   66. The method of claim 56 wherein passing further comprises

2   updating a tracking file that reflects a user request for

3   content.

1   67. The method of claim 56 wherein the passing further

2   comprises updating a tracking file that reflects maintaining

3   and notifying.

1   68. The method of claim 53 wherein the secondary server

2   maintains the index.

1   69. The method of claim 68 wherein the secondary server

2   notifies a tertiary server when content expires.

1   70. The method of claim 69 wherein the secondary server

2   passes one of the unique references to the tertiary server.

1   71. The method of claim 70 wherein the secondary server

2   verifies that the tertiary server is authorized to receive

3   content.

1   72. The method of claim 70 wherein the secondary server

2   maintains and updates a tracking file that reflects actions

3   performed with the index.